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SHORTAGE OF CONSUMERS' GOODS CONTINUES

CLOTHING, FOOD SCARCE -- Neue Zuercher Zeitung, No 357, 20 Feb 50

Figures recently published in the Communist press by Industrial Minister Selbmann illustrate the consumers' goods shortages in Soviet Zone Germany.

To quote Selbmann in a comparison of 1947 and 1949 figures: The supply of textiles increased from 20 million to 36 million meters (80 percent), the supply of stockings from 14 million to 32 million (120 percent), and the supply of shoes from 8 million to 11,500,000 pairs (more than 45 percent).

In more realistic terms, this means that for each of the 20 million inhabitants of Soviet Zone Germany, including East Berlin, there were available in 1947 and 1949 respectively, one and $1\frac{1}{2}$ meters of textiles, $3\frac{1}{4}$ and $1\frac{1}{2}$ pairs of stockings, and $2\frac{1}{5}$ and $3\frac{1}{5}$ pairs of shoes.

The food-supply situation is still very poor. Rations for East Berlin, following increases of allocations since 1 December 1949, are generally 60 percent higher than allocations for similar categories in the rest of Soviet Zone Germany. In caloric content they correspond approximately to West Berlin rations. The following monthly rations are now distributed to normal consumers:

	East Berlin	Soviet Zone
Bread	12 kg	12 kg
Meat and fish	1,500 gr	900 gr
Sugar	1,500 "	750 "
Cereals (farina, macaroni, etc)	1,650 "	1,050 "

In the Soviet Zone (at least in certain areas) ration cards are no longer issued to shopkeepers with more than five employees or enterprises with more than ten workers. They are forced to cover their entire requirements by purchases in the shops of the state-owned "Trade Organizations," where prices, figured at an East mark/ West mark ratio of 6:1, are about the same or slightly less than those in effect in West Berlin; but wages generally do not exceed in actual number of marks, those paid in West Berlin, (without allowing for the difference in exchange value).

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PRODUCES WORLD'S SMALLEST TYPEWRITER -- Die Tat, No 19, 21 Jan 50

The state-owned Croma factories in Markersdorf, near Chemnitz, are putting out the world's smallest typewriter.

The machine has an over-all height of only 53 millimeters, including the cover, and can easily be carried in a handbag.

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